

*To the Chairman and Members of the Hardingstone
Rural District Council.*

MARCH, 1926.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my ANNUAL REPORT for the year 1925.

The area of the district is 32,542 acres.

The population for 1925 is 7,457, a decrease of 39 over the previous year. For 1921 the population was 7,480.

The number of inhabited houses for 1921 was 285 Dwelling and 1,845 Working-class.

The number of families or separate occupiers for 1921 was 2,139.

The rateable value of the district is £67,490. The sum represented by a penny rate is £281 4s. 0d.

The district is naturally an agricultural one, boot-making is also carried on in some of the villages. There is one boot-making factory, but there is no other place employing any large number of men.

The births for the year total 121 (60 males and 61 females)—of this total 1 male and 2 females were illegitimate. This makes a ratio of 16·2 per 1,000 of population. In 1924 the births were 126. For England and Wales the birth-rate is 18·3.

Deaths total 96 (52 males and 44 females)—10 deaths less than in 1924. This is equal to a death-rate of 12·8 per 1,000 of population. The death-rate for England and Wales is 12·2 per 1,000 population.

3 men and 2 women died from Influenza. 4 men and 3 women from Pulmonary Tuberculosis. 3 men and 4 women from Cancer. 9 men and 3 women from Heart Disease. 6 men and 6 women from Disease of the Arteries. 3 women from Bronchitis and 4 men and 5 women from Pneumonia. 3 men from Kidney Disease. 4 males and 1 female infants from Prematurity, etc. Altogether 5 males and 2 females died under one year (1 male infant was illegitimate). This makes a ratio of 55 per 1,000 births, whilst that for England and Wales is 75 per 1,000 births.

From the uncorrected monthly lists sent to me by the Registrar the following are the ages of those dying: 1—10 years, 1; 20—30 years, 5; 30—40 years, 2; 40—50 years, 6; 50—60 years, 6; 60—70 years, 18; 70—80 years, 17; 80—90 years, 17; and 4 over 90 years aged 90, 90, 92 and 97 years.

Three Suicides actually were found in the district. One a Northampton man aged 66 by drowning, another man, aged 48, also from drowning and a man, aged about 40, was found dead on the railway, nothing was known about him. One man of 52 was accidentally knocked down by a train and killed.

There has been a slight increase in the amount of Poor Law relief due to unemployment, and as naturally follows, there has been an increase in gratuitous medical relief.

Cases for hospital treatment, if necessary, are helped by means of In or Out-patient letters.

The Workhouse at Wootton has now been closed, and an agreement made with the Northampton Union to take the Hardingstone Union cases.

The Tuberculosis Hospital for the County is at Rushden, cases if found suitable for treatment are sent there by the County Tuberculosis Officer.

Maternity cases requiring Hospital treatment are sent to the Northampton Hospital, also children are sent to the Northampton Hospital.

Fever cases are treated at the Council's Hospital at Hardingsstone. The Hospital consists of two wards of eight beds each. Small-pox cases can be treated in a fenced-off portion of the grounds in three railway huts containing eight beds.

There has also recently been opened an Orthopædic Hospital for children in the Weston Favell parish, near the town of Northampton, at present they can take in about 20 cases.

Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children is at the Workhouse. The children can be boarded-out in the Scattered Homes.

An Ambulance for infectious cases is kept at the Fever Hospital. For non-infectious and accident cases the ambulance from the town can be hired, or a car used to take the patients to Hospital.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary is in Northampton.

The treatment centre for Venereal Diseases is at the Northampton Hospital.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.—1 District Medical Officer of Health ; 1 Sanitary Inspector.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

General Nursing is carried out by nurses supplied by the Northamptonshire Nursing Association, who station them in certain villages, where they can look after the needs of one or more villages. Their services are paid for by subscriptions from the villagers in whose area she works. She also is qualified as a midwife and attends most of the confinements in her area. For infectious diseases, such as Measles, nurses can be obtained from the Northamptonshire Nursing Association with the authority of the County Medical Officer of Health on the request of the District Medical Officer of Health. When possible, if Measles cases are not prevalent, the nurse's services can be used for cases of Whooping Cough, Diarrhœa in young children or Ophthalmia Neonatorum. No arrangements have been made by the Council for nursing general or infectious cases.

The Council do not subsidise the midwives in the district. There are six midwives in the district, five of these belong to the Northamptonshire Nursing Association.

All Laboratory work, such as analysis of water or examination of swabs for diphtheria, is done at the Pathological Laboratory of the Northampton Hospital. Not enough use is made of this laboratory, especially for Diphtheria swabs. Some medical practitioners do not appear to take any swabs at all, but notify every case at all suspicious as one of Diphtheria, or perhaps they may inject antitoxin and not notify it at all if it recovers. It is difficult to prove this statement, but there is always this suspicion in my mind.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.—There have been no complaints as to the shortage of water or of its quality. An Inspector of the Ministry of Health visited Milton and considered “that a proper water supply for the village of Milton is one of the most urgent needs of the district. One of the two public wells in the village is in obvious danger of pollution, and that the 14 private wells, which were supposed to have been closed on account of pollution, are still in use for drinking purposes.” These wells had all had leaflets stuck on them telling the people if they wanted to use the water for domestic purposes they must boil it.

A new water scheme for Milton will have to be soon undertaken, but owing to the present cost of the undertaking it is difficult to see how it is going to be effectively carried out without imposing a burden on the village greater than it is able to bear. Possibly some of the contamination may be due to faulty laying of the sewers, in places the sewers are very near the surface and are very liable to be broken by heavy motor-lorries passing over them. A meeting was held at Milton and it was there decided to ask the District Council to take up and relay the whole of the sewer where considered necessary before commencing on an expensive water scheme. The District Council have appointed an expert engineer to go into the matter and report. There has been no pollution of rivers or streams.

At Milton the sewage beds have been enlarged and ought now, with intelligent use, be quite sufficient for the needs of the village. Yardley Hastings, Denton, Brafield, Little Houghton, Hardingstone, Milton and Roade have their own water sewage schemes. Piddington, Hackleton, Horton, Wootton and Great Houghton have either middens or pail closets.

Scavenging is done weekly at Hardingstone, the other villages have a quarterly collection of indestructible refuse, such as tins.

81 houses were inspected by the Sanitary Inspector during the year.

57 houses were rendered fit as the result of an informal notice.

4 legal notices were served and the houses were rendered fit as the result of them.

SCHOOLS.—The Sanitary condition of the Schools and their water supplies are satisfactory. The following Schools were closed owing to extensive outbreaks of infectious disease.

Collingtree	...	January	...	3 weeks	...	Mumps
Courteenhall	...	February	...	6½	„	Influenza and Bronchitis
Hardingstone	...	February	...	4	„	Measles
Roade	...	April	...	2	„	Measles
Rothersthorpe	...	January	...	2	„	Measles
Wootton	...	February	...	3	„	Measles

HOUSING. There is no general shortage or excess of houses, nor is there any serious overcrowding.

FITNESS OF HOUSES. The houses are generally reasonably fit for habitation, but some of the older thatched houses have been allowed to fall into a bad state of repair and now they are practically not worth repairing without the expenditure of more money than they are worth. Very little difficulty has been experienced in getting owners to put their houses into a reasonable state of repair.

MATTERS RECEIVING ATTENTION :—

Foul ditches cleaned out	...	...	...	...	5
Dangerous buildings repaired and amended	...	...	...	...	2
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	...	27

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

Number of new houses erected during the year ... 19 and 2 bungalows

With State assistance under the Housing Acts :—

By the Local Authority	...	...	...	...	Nil
By other bodies or persons	...	...	...	19 and 2 bungalows	

UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

Total number of houses inspected for housing defects	...	...	81
Number of houses inspected under the Housing Regulations	...	...	31
" " unfit for habitation	...	...	0
" " found not reasonably fit for habitation	...	...	57

Houses cleansed and whitewashed	...	...	...	...	23
Houses repaired	...	...	...	...	24
Drains re-constructed	...	...	...	...	12
Drains amended	...	...	...	...	18
Closets amended and cleaned out	...	...	...	...	8
New W.C.'s built	...	...	...	...	6
Roofs repaired	...	...	...	...	18
Pumps repaired	...	...	...	...	10
Wells repaired and cleaned out	...	...	...	...	5
Sewers re-constructed and amended	...	...	...	...	9
Cesspits cleaned out	...	...	...	...	8
Accumulation of ashes removed	...	...	...	...	14
Yard-paving repaired	...	...	...	...	2
Number of houses rendered fit as result of formal notice	...	...	...	...	57
Number of legal notices	...	...	...	...	4

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

(A) PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1925.

1. Number of houses in which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	18
2. Number of houses rendered fit by owners	...	...	...	...	16
3. Number of Closing Orders made	...	...	...	...	0

(B) PROCEEDINGS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

1. Number of houses in which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	75
2. Number of houses in which defects were remedied by owners	...	...	...	...	73
3. No Closing Orders were made or determined.					
4. No Demolition Orders were made.					

PLANS WERE PASSED FOR THE FOLLOWING :—

Houses built by private enterprise	...	...	...	...	19
Bungalows built by private enterprise	...	...	...	...	2
No new houses were built as part of the Council building scheme.					

OTHER PLANS PASSED :—

Plans for new houses not yet completed	...	...	...	...	6
" bungalows " "	...	...	...	...	2
Additions and alterations to public houses	...	...	...	...	2
New slaughter houses	...	...	...	...	1
New W.C.'s	...	...	...	...	4
Additions to factories	...	...	...	...	2
Alterations and additions to houses	...	...	...	...	2
Erection of offices	...	...	...	...	1
Plans of memorial hall	...	...	...	...	1

184 visits to the above were made to see they were carried out in accordance with the byelaws and plans submitted.

FOOD INSPECTION.—The milk supply of the district is good on the whole.

1. No action has been taken as to tuberculous milk and cattle.
2. No licences have been granted for the sale of milk under special designations.
3. There has been no refusal or revocation of registration of retailers.

The slaughter-houses have been visited as often as possible when slaughtering is being carried out. 5½ cwt. of meat was surrendered and condemned as unfit for human consumption. This meat was destroyed.

		No. of private Slaughter-houses.			
		1920	January, 1925		December, 1925
Registered	...	10	...	10	10
Licensed	...	—	...	1	1
Totals	...	10	...	11	11

THE FOLLOWING INSPECTIONS WERE MADE :—

		Inspections		Notices	
Dairies and Cowsheds	42	...	4
Slaughter-houses	48	...	3
Bakehouses	23	...	4
Factories and Workshops	8	...	0
Pigsties	4	...	0

Twelve new Certificates were granted during the year for the purpose of carrying on the trade of cowkeepers and purveyors of milk.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.—There are three offensive trades : 1 Knacker's Yard, 1 Tallow Melting Works, 1 Gut Scraping Works.

The above have been visited periodically during the year, and no complaints have been received.

PETROLEUM ACTS.—The whole of the premises where licences have been granted under this Act are in order.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—No especially large outbreaks have occurred in the district, with perhaps the exception of Scarlet Fever, since 1920. This disease, in 1924, was specially marked, but since then there has been a very marked fall in the number of notifications, so that now they are down to about the normal level. No use has been made of the Schiek and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever.

No vaccinations or re-vaccinations were done by the Medical Officer of Health. One contact case, at Great Houghton, refused to be vaccinated.

There were no cases of Small-pox ; Scarlet Fever, 9 cases, 4 were removed to Hospital—no deaths ; Diphtheria, 1 ; Erysipelas, 2 ; Enteric, 0 ; Puerperal Fever, 1 ; Chicken-pox, 39 ; Pneumonia, 18.

The cases of Scarlet Fever were scattered throughout the district, likewise the Pneumonia cases too. 17 cases of Chicken-pox were at Cogenhoe and 13 at Roade.

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES				DEATHS			
Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
7 years	14 years	—	—	27 years	25 years	—	—
11 „	24 „	—	—	36 „	26 „	—	28 years
20 „	25 „	—	28 years	51 „	40 „	—	—
27 „	43 „	—	—	54 „	—	—	—
33 „	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total 5	4	0	1	4	3	0	1

There was one death notified by the Registrar in a Non-Pulmonary case, all the other deaths were in cases which had been notified beforehand.

One case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum was notified. This case was treated in hospital and left there with vision unimpaired.

Yours faithfully,

H. F. PERCIVAL.

